The Middlebury Campus

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FACULTY CALL FOR REVERSAL OF BUDGET CUTS

RYAN MCELROY / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Faculty called for the reversal of budget cuts that targeted their retirement match benefits and possible future changes to healthcare plans. The vote was nearly unanimous.

By MADELEINE KAPTEIN
Managing Editor

In a plenary faculty meeting on Friday, April 18, 94% of the nearly 200 faculty members in attendance voted to pass a motion demanding that the administration and Board of Trustees reverse the recently announced compensation cuts for employees and enrollment increase.

The motion calls on the administration to collaborate with elected faculty committees to address Middlebury's $14.1 million deficit without unjustly impacting employees and students. It also directly urges incoming president Ian Baucom to state his position on the new financial measures. Of the 175 voting attendees, 164 voted in favor of the motion, eight voted against it and three abstained.

The motion — which was co-sponsored by the Faculty Council and Middlebury's chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) —was in response to the email sent to community members on April 2 titled "The Budget, Our Way Forward." In the announcement, Interim President Steve Snyder, Provost Michelle McCauley, and Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration David Provost stated that the college would reduce long-term faculty and staff's 15% retirement match to 11%. Faculty members hired after 2017 already have a maximum 11% match rate.

The college also announced that undergraduate enrollment projections will grow to 2,600–2,650 without a parallel increase in faculty or staff positions, among other cost-saving measures. The motion argued that these changes will significantly reduce overall faculty compensation while adding to their workloads, further injuring already teetering morale, engagement and trust.

Separate from the motion, at least 12 faculty members from the Department of Economics pledged to boycott college-wide events last week, including

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Middlebury's crew and rugby teams move to Athletics Department

By ROSELLA GRAHAM
News Editor

The college's crew and rugby teams have moved under the umbrella of the Middlebury Athletics department, beginning the process to exit the supervision of the Student Activities Office (SAO). Anonymous donations made the transition in February possible by funding new coaches and other support for the men's and women's teams of both sports.

The process of finalizing the transition is likely to take several years, team leaders said. The move to Middlebury Athletics will not affect their organizations' status as club teams for the foreseeable future.

Since its founding in 1988, Middlebury College Crew has been overseen by the SAO. But discussions of moving it to Middlebury Athletics have gained momentum in recent seasons. During the past two years especially, the comparatively low salaries the SAO is able to offer coaches of club teams has led crew to struggle with hiring and maintaining a proper coaching staff.

Assistant Crew Coach Rich Connell said the team received a donation this winter large enough to fund a higher coach salary and transition to Middlebury Athletics.

"It's been kind of talked about for many years, and there was not a lot of opportunity for it to happen with staff dollars and just the way the structure had been set up," Connell said.

While this change is crucial for securing a long-term coach, the day-to-day operations of the crew team will not change dramatically, he clarified.

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COURTESY PHOTO / NOAH WILLSON

The Men's Rugby Team will be incorporated under the Athletics Department, along with the men's and women's crew teams.

LOCAL

STATE OFFICIALS ADDRESS VERMONT'S GROWING POLITICAL ANXIETY

NADIA HARE / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Over 200 people attended the forum at Town Hall Theater last Saturday.

By VIOLET WEXLER
Staff Writer

The Town Hall Theater in Middlebury hosted a community forum titled "Impact of Federal Actions on Vermont" on Saturday, April 16. The forum aimed to address the piling questions about the Trump administration and its potential impact on Vermont. The event was free and open to the public. While the 232 seats in the theater space filled quickly, an additional 550 viewers watched the livestream on the Middlebury Community Television YouTube channel. The forum was also broadcasted live on local television, expanding access to residents statewide.

Addison County Sen. Ruth Hardy and Executive Director of the Town Hall Theater Lisa Mitchell co-organized the event, which featured a panel of four government representatives: Attorney General Charity Clark, Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas, State Treasurer Mike Pieciak and

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TAKING A DIVE INTO S.E.A. DINETTE

By RACHELLE TALBERT
Copy Editor

From sushi to poke bowls, S.E.A. Dinette has served a variety of seafood since its opening on Sept. 8, 2024, replacing the space in McCullough Student Center that once housed the student-run Crossroads Café and then Wilson Café for the 2023–2024 academic year, which sold Starbucks products. The space that once smelled of lattes and cappuccinos is now a stop for South East Asian cuisine, wildly altering the purpose and aura of the space.

As the new food retail operation works its way into Middlebury campus culture, students have responded in various ways — ranging from excitement to disinterest. At the forefront of the enthusiasm is S.E.A Dinette founder and long-time Middlebury partner John Maru.

Maru started his sushi journey at Middlebury by working with Sushi with Gusto, a franchise which was absorbed by a larger company in 2018. Maru then decided to start his own business, Sushi Maru, so he could pursue his passion: making sushi to bring people together.

ABBIE CHANG / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

S.E.A. Dinette, operated by Sushi Maru, opened this September to sell South East Asian food in the space below The Grille.

"I realized that if the company I worked with is no longer running its business, but I'm still here doing sushi, why don't I try to have a deal with the college directly?" Maru asked. "So I tried to meet with the Dining System Director, then Dan [Detora], and I talked about what I wanted it to be. I want to run my own [business]."

Maru has been operating Sushi Maru since 2020, hand-crafting his specialty sold in Midd Xpress, Crossroads and now in S.E.A. Dinette — served with a smile and an extra piece of sushi, if you're lucky.

Between Maru's interest and financial issues in The Grille and Crossroads at the time, it seemed like a natural choice to let Maru create and operate S.E.A. Dinette independently from the college, wrote Director of Food Operations Dan Detora in an email to The Campus. This is unlike Crossroads, which is student-run and operates under Retail Food Operations.

"We were looking for a way to give more variety to the campus community. Grille sales were very low during the daytime hours, and we

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NEWS

Derek Penslar gives lecture on Israel-Palestine history

By PHOEBE AN

Middlebury celebrates Earth Month

By MAGGIE BRYAN & ASA STONE

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LOCAL

The Middlebury Marquis gets a vintage-inspired "face-lift"

By LILY JENSEN

The Middlebury Marquis announced on March 31 that it would temporarily close for its renovation project until May 1. The project will focus on exterior...

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OPINIONS

How does The Campus approach anonymity?

By RYAN McELROY

While we're defending research, let's talk about writing too

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

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ARTS & CULTURE

How Rania Matar captures cross-cultural womanhood

By CHRISTY LIANG

Benjamin Adam Weiss '25 presents "Hadestown: A Song Cycle Sung Again"

By SAMMY JO SERELL

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SPORTS

Women's track and field dominates home invitational

By TING CUI

Seven Questions with Hope Shue '25, women's lacrosse

By MAX MYERS

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MIDDLEBURY CELEBRATES EARTH MONTH

THE STORYTELLER'S JOURNEY
2025 PLANET FORWARD SUMMIT
DR. IMANI M. CHEERS, DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC ADVENTURES, PLANET FORWARD, MODERATOR
MORGHAN MANUEL, STUDENT, HOWARD UNIVERSITY
JOY REEVES, DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT, THE RACHEL CARSON COUNCIL
2025 PLANET FORWARD SUMMIT APRIL 17-18
#PLANETFWD #PFSUMMIT25
GW

COURTESY PHOTO / MINNA BROWN

Devin Santikarma '25.5 won best Multimedia Story at Planet Forward's summit in Washington, DC.

By MAGGIE BRYAN & ASA STONE

Senior News Editor & Staff Writer

Earth Day is celebrated internationally on April 22, but at Middlebury, this year's festivities spanned the entire month and beyond. Between March 29 and April 30, campus groups including the Sustainability and Environmental Affairs team, the Climate Action Program, the Prism Center and the Knoll hosted over 30 Earth Month-related events.

The month began with a visit from Eli Clare, a writer whose work focuses on the intersection of disability, queer and environmental justice, on April 2. Community members, students, faculty and staff filled The Orchard room of the Franklin Environmental Center at Hillcrest to listen as Clare read passages from his forthcoming book, "Unfurl: Survivals, Sorrows, and Dreaming." The talk preceded an April 21 student workshop led by Clare titled "How to stay in justice & liberation work for the long haul" during which attendees focused on topics like burnout, urgency and coalition.

The second week of April featured more workshops, including a residency led by Emily Welty and Matthew Breay Bolton, members of a Nobel Prize-winning campaign to abolish nuclear weapons and 2024 Middlebury honorary degree recipients. On Tuesday, April 8 in the Crest Room, Welty and Breay Bolton led a group of students in a workshop on non-violent action. During the workshop, participants brainstormed strategies for non-violent action, placing emphasis on creating specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound goals. Welty and Breay Bolton emphasized that the goal of non-violent action campaigns is not to immediately convert an opponent of an issue to a supporter, but rather to make more marginal change, such as convincing a passive supporter to become an active one.

Middlebury's Earth Month celebrations extended off campus, too. A group of students, faculty and staff traveled to Washington, D.C. from Wednesday, April 16 to Sunday, April 20 to attend the Planet Forward Summit. The theme of the conference was "The Climate Divide: New Narratives to Transform the Crisis" and was presented by George Washington University in association with Middlebury's Conflict Transformation Collaborative.

The summit featured talks led by several Middlebury affiliates. Planet Forward Founder Frank Sesno '77 began the summit by delivering a welcome address on Thursday morning. Sesno's introduction was followed by a talk on transforming conflict by Sarah Stroup, Middlebury professor of Political Science and director of the Collaborative in Conflict Transformation, alongside Netta Avineri, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey professor of Intercultural Communication. Over lunch, attendees heard from Middlebury Scholar in Residence Carolyn Finney in conversation with Sesno and on Friday, Middlebury Schuman Distinguished Scholar Bill McKibben delivered a keynote address to summit attendees.

COURTESY PHOTO / MINNA BROWN

Students, faculty and staff visited Washington, DC last week for Planet Forward's annual summit.

The power of storytelling was present throughout the event.

"People perceive the world mostly through stories. I did my best to convince everyone to join in on a shared story about the power of the sun, leading to SunDay in September," McKibben wrote in an email to The Campus.

Minna Brown '07, director of the Climate Action Program, attended the summit and reflected on the power of coming together to celebrate.

"It was great to hear about SunDay.earth from Bill McKibben, witness Carolyn Finney's storytelling, and see students finding areas of new connection, concern, and validation. We're facing huge challenges, and we need to find as many ways to gather and build community," Brown wrote in an email to The Campus.

The summit culminated with Devin Santikarma '25.5 winning Best Multimedia Story for his photojournalism essay Water Gods. Along with the other winners, Santikarma will embark on a fully-funded 10-day expedition to the Galapagos this summer.

Ella Powers '27 attended the Planet Forward conference and has also been involved in organizing Earth Month events on campus. As co-manager of Sunday Night Environmental Group (SNEG), Powers led a panel on Heating and Cooling at Middlebury on April 8, which featured experts like Dean of Sustainability Jack Byrne, Associate Vice President of Operations Mike Moser and Debbie New, a coordinator at Vermont Community Thermal Networks.

"My biggest takeaway from the conversation was students' interest in understanding the current system and wanting to further explore how we can increase the sustainability of heating and cooling at Middlebury," Powers wrote in an email to The Campus.

Although many of Middlebury's Earth Month discussions preceded Earth Week itself, the celebration continues in full force during the week of April 21. Upcoming events include more workshops, talks and activities geared towards students, community members and even staff members.

On April 28, Staff Council will host a Change in Seasons Clothing Swap & Donations. Asa Waterworth, university relations associate in International Programs and Erin Morrison, assistant director of the First Year Experience, planned the event with the hope that staff could engage in sustainability, too.

"We hope folks will be inspired to clear some space in their closets and shake up their wardrobes for free and, in the spirit of sustainability, without relying on fast fashion. If they enjoy the event, it's something they can easily replicate with friends or family," Waterworth wrote in an email to The Campus.

Other Earth Week events include an April 23 talk from Dan Suarez, assistant professor of Environmental Studies, titled "Radical Implications: Politicization, Pedagogy, and Planetary Ecological Crisis." EcoReps is hosting interactive events throughout the week, including Trivia with the Environmental Council on Thursday, April 24, at 7 p.m. in Dana Auditorium. The Howard E. Woodin Colloquium Series talk this week will be given by Ethan Tapper, a forester and author of "How to Love a Forest: The Bittersweet Work of Tending a Changing World." On Thursday, at 5:30 p.m., former climate negotiator for the Mexican government Ivonne Maricarmen Serna '23 will speak about her experiences at the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP29, in the Robert A. Jones '59 Conference Room.

Editor's Note: Senior News Editor Maggie Bryan '25 is a fellow with the Climate Action Program.

Harvard Director of Jewish Studies Derek Penslar gives talk on Israel-Palestine history

By PHOEBE AN

Staff Writer

COURTESY PHOTO

Derek Penslar is the Director of Harvard's Center for Jewish Studies

Director of Harvard's Center for Jewish Studies Derek Penslar gave this year's Hannah A. Quint Lecture in Jewish Studies, titled "The Struggle for Palestine on the World Stage, 1947–1949." As Harvard's William Lee Frost Professor of Jewish History, Penslar studies Jewish history within the contexts of modern nationalism, capitalism and colonialism.

He spoke to an audience of over 50 Middlebury students, faculty and community members on Thursday, April 17 in Twilight Auditorium. Beginning in 1988, the annual Hannah A. Quint Lecture was by Eliot Levinson '64 in honor of his mother to "provoke interest in and to deepen understanding of the culture, the religion, the history, and the literature of the Jews, and to bring a Jewish perspective to bear on ethical and political questions."

Penslar began by posing questions for his audience: Why Israel? Why does it attract so much attention and passion? Listing examples, he probed at the lack of widespread awareness of other conflicts in the world.

"What about Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or Syria?" Penslar asked. "Palestinians are not the only people to be displaced."

He then compared the current pro-Palestinian movement across college campuses to the Vietnam anti-war movement. Despite there being no enlistment of American troops for Israel, Penslar noted that college students express similar passion for Palestine as past generations did for Vietnam in the 1960s.

Reframing his own questions, Penslar stated that the answer to why this is is not obvious, nor is antisemitism the main or sole factor for this focus on Israel. Instead, he said the answer lies in thinking of the long-term historical conflict of Israel-Palestine as a lightning rod for anti-colonialism, anger and Holocaust guilt.

Through a series of primary sources from past government officials and popular news media, Penslar analyzed attitudes toward Israel among governments, media organizations and the public in Asia, South America and Europe. Concentrating on 1947–1949, he showed reactions to the surge of Zionism, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and the formation of Israel from 1947–1949.

Penslar also examined Arab nations' response to the establishment of the state of Israel as seen in the Middle East and South Asia. He walked through how those regions saw emerging demands for a constitutional Arab state for the Palestinians. For many Arab nations, according to Penslar, Zionism was seen as an extension of British and American colonial expansion.

Penslar also spoke about how Arab calls for Palestinian nationalism were supported in South Asia, where fears and skepticism towards partition stemmed in part from the 1947 British partition of Pakistan and India. Because this support for Palestine stemmed from the violent population transfer that occurred under the partition, Penslar noted South Asian rhetoric was mostly free from antisemitism.

Europe's role in the genocide of Jewish people during the Holocaust also shaped certain reactions to Zionism. For some, that led to the desire for forgiveness of Holocaust guilt and served as a new direction of antisemitism, both among groups opposing a Jewish state and among those still looking to expel Jewish populations from their borders.

Penslar's final analysis centered on Latin America and its unique relationship with Palestine. Because of the geographical distance between the two regions, Penslar pointed out how Latin America has less direct involvement in the reconstruction of a post-Holocaust world. Zionist political organizations, called pro-Palestine committees in reference to the land itself, are somewhat prominent in Latin American countries.

However, Penslar also underscored Latin America's animosity towards Britain because of previous informal colonial projects. Enclaves of Arab and Palestinian immigrants who sought refuge in South American countries were thus able to successfully lobby their governments to support the Palestinian movement. This resulted in many Latin American governments abstaining from voting on the British-backed partition.

Following the lecture, Penslar opened the floor for questions from the audience.

The first question remarked on the lack of anti-Arab sentiment presented as a motivator for the Jewish violence and resulting displacement of Palestinians in 1948.

In his response, Penslar mentioned anti-Arab racism present in the Zionist movement and also added that some voices sought coexistence between Israel and Palestine.

Another series of questions asked Penslar about his historical evidence for the claim that a two-state solution would be effective or possible.

Penslar stated there is no guarantee of a reasonable outcome, as historical evidence suggests the high likelihood of unrest in both outcomes, partition and a multicultural federation.

COURTESY PHOTO / DELPHINE WU

Twilight Hall, where Penslar gave the annual Hannah A. Quint Lecture in Jewish Studies on April 17.

TAKING A DIVE INTO S.E.A. DINETTE

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were asked to close [during those hours] due to financial reasons. This left a void in the space. We have had a long-standing relationship with John Maru, as he has produced our Sushi for many years. He was asking for additional space for hot items, so we felt this would work well in the current location," Detora wrote.

During the initial years of Sushi Maru, Maru made his sushi in Crossroads with students. After two years, he moved to the Freeman International Center (FIC) in a kosher kitchen, which he did for four years. Working alone, Maru expressed how he missed connecting with students, an experience that S.E.A Dinette has revived for him.

"I used to have communication directly working upfront with students, and since I moved to the FIC building, I hadn't had any contact with customers, staff, faculty, students. I was all by myself alone in the FIC building. I would say it wasn't really good. Still good, but not this much," Maru said.

In its early stages, many students have responded favorably to S.E.A. Anastasia Liapkovich '28 described having just bought a salmon poke bowl earlier this week — an evening study snack.

"I usually go to S.E.A. Dinette when I have a busy week or need to destress, so it helps me relax by eating good food. I used to get sushi at home all the time, so it's kind of nostalgic," Liapkovich said.

"As someone who's from the desert, I appreciate access to fresh and tasty seafood," said Ridgly Anzalone '28, a lifelong New Mexico resident.

But not all students know about S.E.A. Dinette, or frequent the space as much as they used to when coffee was sold there. Agnes Heffner '25.5 reflected on her experience ordering their food.

"The people were very nice, the service was very fast, but the options that I chose were subpar and a little disappointing. My pork inside the bao buns was great, but the outside broke four of my plastic forks when I tried to eat it. I do know that the fried egg noodles are really good," Heffner said.

Heffner thinks that the S.E.A Dinette makes the space feel more like a restaurant than a place to study, leading her to be less inclined to spend time there than she was when coffee was available. She thinks that they should consider selling more beverage options, such as bubble tea, to attract more customers and enliven the space.

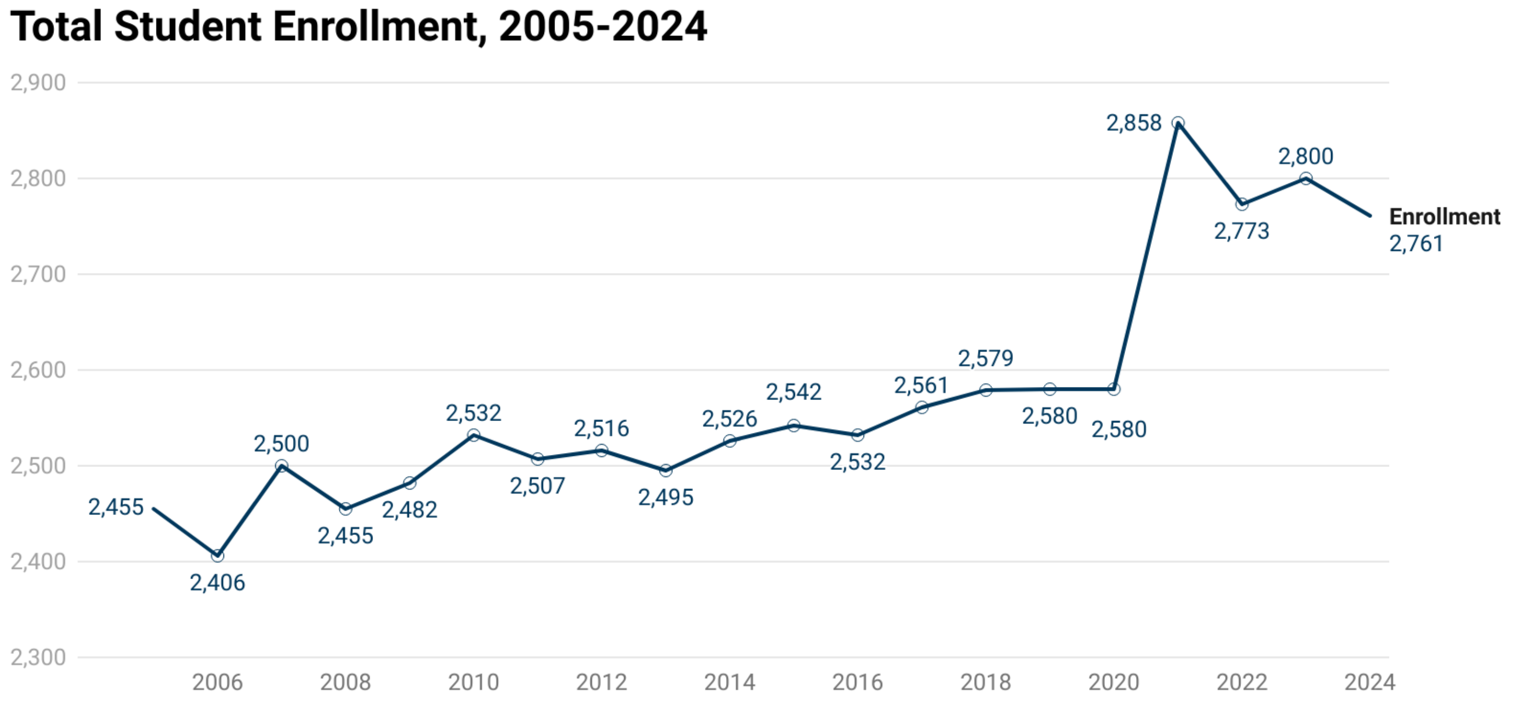
"I've honestly never heard of it," Violet Ross '25 wrote to The Campus. "I haven't spent time in the space since it was the Crossroads location my freshman year (2021–22). I spent a lot of time in the space that year doing work and hanging out with my friends and I loved it."

As S.E.A. Dinette gets on its feet, only time will tell to what extent it will be a financial success.

"I think people love it, and so do I. What I'm trying to say is, yes. It's getting busier than before," Maru said, beaming.

Editor's Note: Managing Editor Madeleine Kaptein '25.5 and News Editor Evan Weiss '25 contributed reporting to this article.

FACULTY CALL FOR REVERSAL OF BUDGET CUTS



A recreation of a graph presented at the recent Faculty Council meeting.

Created with Datawrapper

RYAN MCELROY / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Faculty Council recently presented a graph of the student enrollment at Middlebury from 2004 to 2024, peaking during Covid-19 at 2,858 students.

Commencement, until the college reverses the measures.

Before voting, several faculty members stood up to air their grievances over the measures and express their support for the motion. Almost every person who spoke was met with an uproar of applause from their colleagues.

One faculty member pointed out that salaries have not been adequately adjusted in the past five years to account for inflation. In addition, they stated that the four percentage point reduction of the retirement match is equivalent to a salary demotion to a lower position — a shift from a full professorship to an associate professorship, for example.

"If the leadership makes these decisions and they cannot say, 'It is not normal and acceptable to lose so much money in real compensation over a decade that you effectively get demoted for all your dedication and service, and that you're no better off now than you were a decade ago,' then we have to realize that none of our futures, not us 600 [faculty], not the rest of everyone else, none of our futures mean anything to college," the faculty member said. "If we accept that, then there is no reason for them to do right by anyone else down the road."

Among many criticisms was that no faculty were invited to the discussion about the new cuts. The announcement of these changes came as a complete surprise to faculty members, especially considering administrators have previously told faculty that their salaries are not the reason for the college's deficit.

"Without faculty, there's no college. You don't have an accreditation without faculty, you cannot confer degrees. Without us, there is no Middlebury… And yet we continue to be overworked, asked to do more with less," one faculty member said. "It is clear that faculty are viewed as an infinite resource from which more and more labor can be extracted."

Multiple faculty members expressed disappointment that Snyder, Provost and McCauley were not present at the meeting to hear their prepared remarks despite having been invited. Faculty Council Chair Jason Mittell clarified that the administrators cited a prior commitment to account for their absence.

"I think it's really important to support this motion so that we can at least get back to a negotiation approach where we can talk about what we think the core responsibilities are, so that we can have actual faculty governance, so that we can actually sus out what we think the least painful options are of a relatively unappetizing set of options," one faculty member said.

Faculty members considered what this effort to find an alternative method to fix the budget deficit might look like, discussing open collaboration with Human Resources on how to reduce costs. Negotiations surrounding hiring freezes and cuts to employee health insurance plans were broached as options that some faculty could potentially support if included in the planning. But others took issue with the idea that professors should feel obligated to work to alleviate the deficit just to avoid their pay being cut.

"It's not our job to plan our future cuts. That's not our responsibility. In fact, I would say it would be irresponsible for us to take that role on," a faculty member said. "And so I think we should be very cautious about proceeding in a way that we're anticipating or expecting to cave."

According to the motion, the Faculty Resources Committee has been discussing ways to help the college's deteriorating financial situation with the administration in recent years, who have repeatedly assured Faculty Council that the college would aim to return to the low 2,500s as an enrollment target.

Minor disagreement arose over the enrollment aspect of the motion. Some faculty members think the college should allow an enrollment slightly above the historic norm of approximately 2,500 if it means saving money. Enrollment from this fall was 2,774, so aiming for 2,600–2,650 would be an overall decrease from the current number of students.

"While the last four years have been an absolute disaster, I'm less concerned about 100 more students on campus given the staffing levels we have," a professor said. "I'm really, really concerned about the compensation half more than the increase in the students. I think one's a much bigger problem than the other."

However, others maintained that growing the norm for enrollment, even if the actual number of students on campus will be less than it is currently, is still a damaging breach of Middlebury's original mission to remain a small, liberal arts college and places a strain on the student and employee experience.

"For me, the ultimate question is, why would we want to go above our historic norms, besides money?" Mittell asked.

One professor asked why the underperforming Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS) was not addressed in the motion, as one professor estimated it has cost the college $250 million since its acquisition. The April 2 email cited under enrollment at the Institute as the cause for $8.7 million of this year's deficit. The representative from AAUP said that Monterey will be addressed at a later faculty meeting in May.

Economics faculty members spoke at the meeting about their boycott of commencement, encouraging their colleagues to join them while acknowledging the difficulty of the decision to do so.

"There's nothing we can do that will be visible that won't also have some damage, and I think that we've got to choose very carefully what we do, and I think this is a reasonable thing," an Economics professor said.

They also shouted out their petition, which is open for any member of the Middlebury community — faculty, staff, students and alumni — to sign at go/savethebenefits/ to denounce the budget cuts. As of this Tuesday morning, over 500 people had already signed it, according to Professor of Economics Andrea Robbett.

Another Economics professor mentioned believing that the motion alone will not be enough to change the administration's decision, but that a boycott will send a stronger message.

"You must ask yourself what you are prepared to do to hold the administration's feet to the fire here," the professor said.

The reduction in faculty compensation comes at a time when higher education faces considerable threats, as the Trump administration recently revoked federal funding from several top universities who failed to comply with lists of their demands. Faculty at the meeting cited worries about even deeper cuts in the future if the federal government implements a higher endowment tax and if fewer international students — who are a significant income source for universities — enroll at the college due to fears of sudden visa revocations.

The AAUP is set to meet with the incoming president in July and will begin preparations for that meeting this week. In this unique transitional period for the college, Middlebury faculty said they are prepared to raise their concerns with the new president head-on.

"I don't think I have ever felt so strongly that our love and our dedication towards our students is being exploited, that there is simply a belief that we will take anything and keep going because we put in those hours because we care about them," a faculty member who has been at the college for 20 years said.

Editor's Note: Faculty Council Chair Jason Mittell is the advisor for The Middlebury Campus. He had no role in the publication of this article.

THEA VOLPP / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

MIDDLEBURY'S CREW AND RUGBY TEAMS MOVE TO ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

COURTESY PHOTO / JAMES CUMMINGS

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the crew team will not change dramatically, he clarified.

"The rowing team has always kind of had to follow similar guidelines to the varsity sports," Connell said. The team has access to athletic trainers at the college and thus follows standard guidelines for sports medicine and injury reporting. "I think it's going to remain fairly similar to what it has been the last, like, 10, 12, 15 years."

The oversight of both crew and rugby will soon transfer to a newly created Assistant Athletics Director position, who will work directly under Director of Athletics Erin Quinn '86. The transition process is still ongoing; the SAO continues to collaborate with Athletics to hire coaches and reallocate responsibilities. For now, the crew team is working with both departments in the college as it waits for its new head coach to start in June.

Rugby's transition is slightly delayed, with changes expected to take shape in the fall once the SAO provides them with the operational specifics of the transition. Men's Rugby President Cole Siefer '25 said that the process for securing a coach and finalizing the transition will not be finished this year.

"This transition is a multiyear process," Siefer wrote in an email to The Campus. "There are still a lot of details to be figured out on what exactly the transition will look like for each team."

Despite the administrative change, competitions for all three teams — men's rugby, women's rugby and crew — will remain largely unchanged. Both the crew and rugby teams already follow demanding training schedules and competitive calendars similar to varsity programs.

In its races throughout the Northeast, the crew team competes against other NESCAC schools and a mix of club and university teams.

"The team already kind of held itself to varsity standards: training six days a week, and in the racing season, it's like a race every weekend," Connell explained. "I think the racing schedule will remain relatively the same. Even as a club, especially in New England, there's not a huge club-varsity distinction besides the D-Is and the Ivies, so, a lot of the D-IIIs, D-IIs, and clubs all race each other anyway."

The rugby team competes in Division III of National Collegiate Rugby, primarily playing against other club teams, according to Siefer.

"We mostly compete against other club teams, but we do compete against some varsity programs — we played at a tournament hosted by Norwich University a few weeks ago, which is a varsity program," Siefer wrote.

Neither team hopes to pursue varsity status because doing so could mean cutting players and changing the team's culture.

"I hope we remain a club team," Siefer explained. "The club being student-led is an important part of our history and culture — we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the club in 2022. I think that the transition to being managed by the Athletics Department will only elevate our operations and success, and I cannot wait to see where the team goes next year."

Crew Co-Captain Aliya Hosford '25 echoed this hope to remain a club team, underscoring the importance of keeping the team open to all students — which is only possible by remaining a club.

"One of the best parts about Midd Crew is that it is a group of people who are choosing to show up each day to row," Hosford wrote in an email to The Campus. "No one was recruited, most of us didn't even row before coming to Middlebury. And yet, we have a 70 person team that loves what they do and loves to spend time together. Moving to varsity would eliminate this part of Midd Crew and it would no longer be a no cuts team."

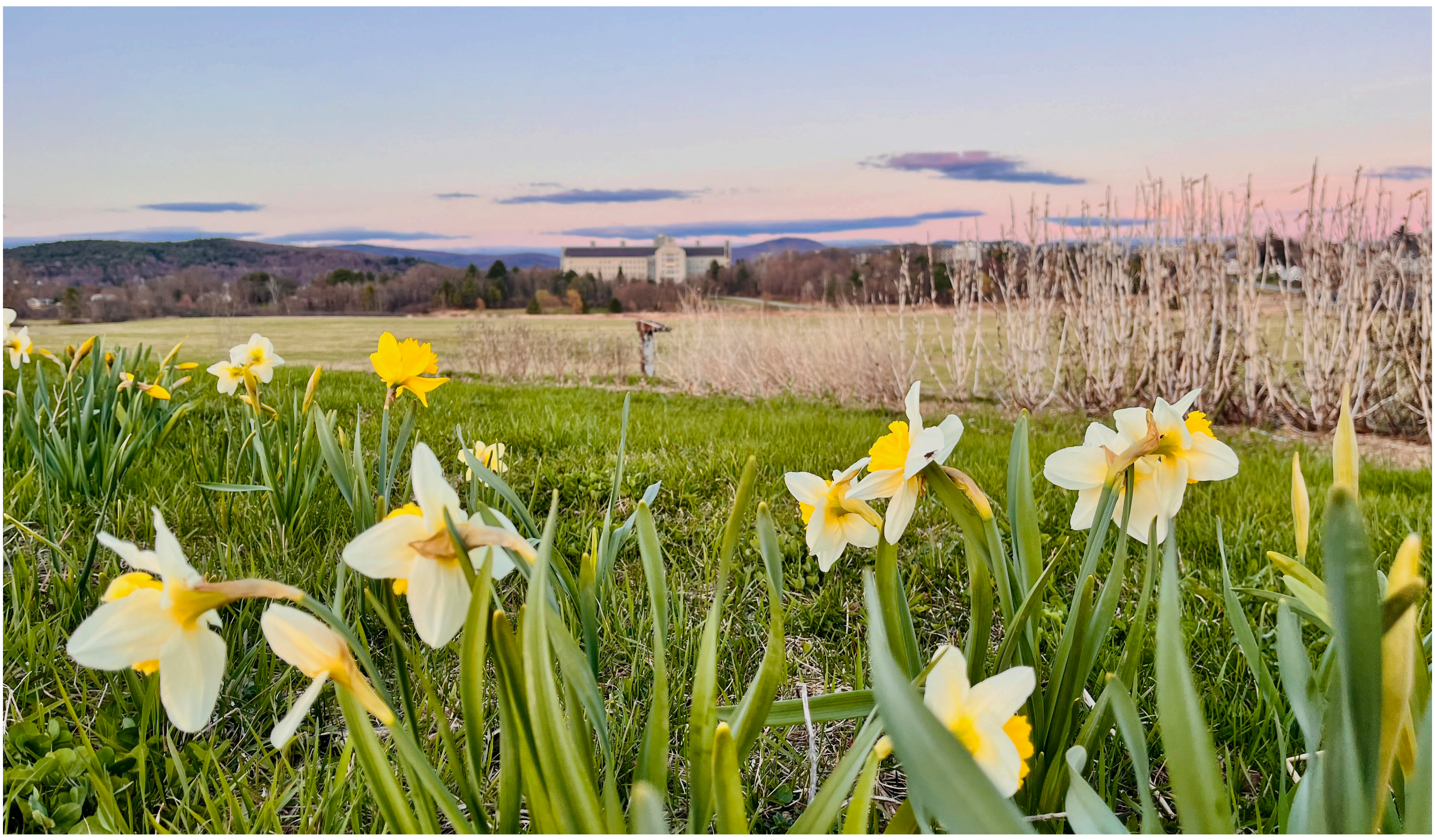
Connell agreed with this sentiment about the team's unique spirit as a club team.

"I almost don't want to see it be varsity, because the spirit of Middlebury Crew is that anyone, no matter your background or what you did before in high school they can come here and you can try rowing," Connell said. "We don't take ourselves too seriously, but we still work hard and we race hard, and then when we beat those higher-funded varsity teams, it's way more fun."

COURTESY PHOTO / NOAH WILLSON

The Middlebury Men's Rugby Team competes against both club and varsity teams throughout the Northeast. Crew will also remain a club sport, which their co-captain said would be essential to maintaining their team's unique character at the college.

PHOTO OF THE WEEK: A VIEW OF BIHALL, NARCISSUS FLOWERS AT THE KNOLL



TING CUI / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

State officials in community forum address Vermont's growing political

Continued from Page 1

Hardy herself. Each was invited deliberately to speak to their unique areas of expertise.

Clark helps defend Vermont more generally against actions by the federal government. Hanzas and her team are focused on election laws and defending the right to vote. Pieciak is working with a committee to protect Vermont's finances from the tariffs and cuts imposed at the federal level. Hardy, who represents Addison County, has been focused on proactively defending healthcare and gender-affirming care in Vermont as well as strengthening protections for immigrants.

During the panel, community members raised a range of questions regarding issues such as healthcare, education and environmental policy. The majority of in-person attendees were senior citizens from Middlebury or nearby towns. While many were primarily concerned with how these policies would affect their daily lives, there was also a strong desire among attendees to get involved and support efforts to create change.

"What can we as a state do to protect residents from being illegally abducted or forcibly removed from the state? What should we as citizens do if we witness such a situation?" an audience member asked.

In response to this question, Clark began by outlining federal restrictions on immigration law. She then expanded on how individuals can play an active role in protecting vulnerable residents, offering a detailed overview of organizations to contact and resources available to help community members understand their legal rights.

"We have a number of wonderful agencies and nonprofits here in Vermont, but the one that I refer people to regularly is the Vermont Asylum Assistance Project. They have a ton of resources. I would immediately call them, and if you are feeling nervous and anxious, look up their number and put it in your wallet," Clark told the audience.

In addition to taking live questions, the panel responded to several that were submitted ahead of the event. Most inquiries focused on how broader federal funding cuts might affect individuals' daily lives. Some citizens also spoke on behalf of local organizations or committees to represent their exact concerns.

"On behalf of the individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, I would like to know what impact the Medicaid cuts will have for people who are getting services, especially help with their daily needs from the home and community-based waiver services," an audience member said.

Addison-1 Rep. Robin Scheu addressed this question, drawing from her involvement in developing Vermont's upcoming budget as well as her preparations for potential budget cuts. She explained that much of the state's funding is federally sourced and highlighted specific steps Vermont is taking to combat any further harm to these programs.

"I love to hear a discussion at the state level of how nonprofits should and could be buffered against the cuts in services with federal dollars. I don't expect the state to pick up the bill everywhere, but if we have a lot more people losing their housing, all the other systems are going to fall apart as well. So I'd love to know the prioritizing of what services are important," another audience member said.

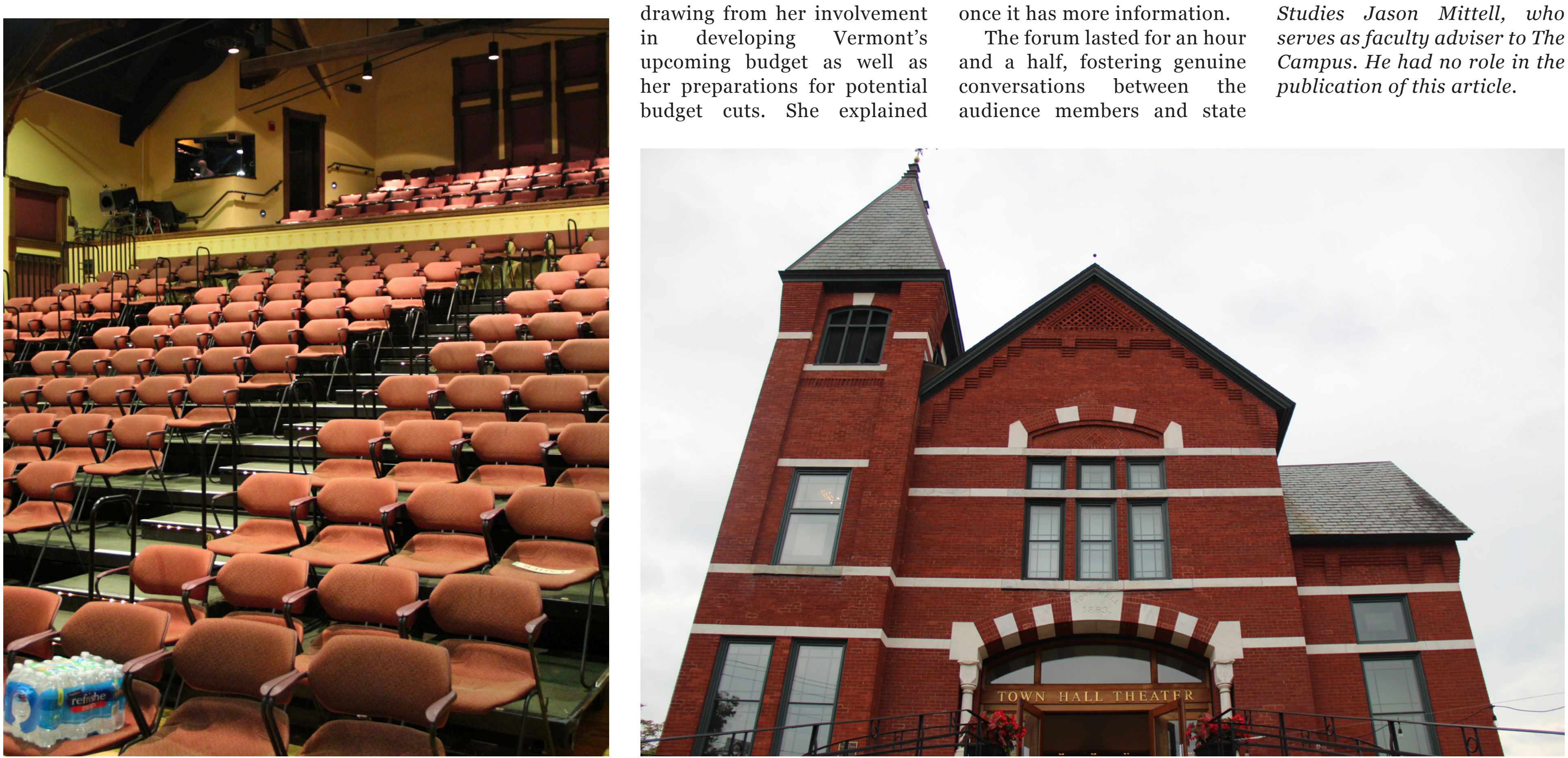
Hardy answered this question, explaining that the state government will first have to determine where cuts are made and then decide how to prioritize the use of its funding. She emphasized that the legislature can control many financial matters and that it will examine budgeting and policymaking on this concern once it has more information.

The forum lasted for an hour and a half, fostering genuine conversations between the audience members and state officials. While the panelists only had the venue for a set time, many audience members had lingering questions. Hardy assured attendees that she would remain available after the event to personally address any further concerns.

Beyond answering questions and giving direct advice, the panelists encouraged citizens to keep fighting for what they believe in.

"This moment is more than being a Democrat or a Republican. This moment is so much bigger than ideology or those party differences. This moment is all about what is right and what is wrong," State Treasurer Pieciak said. "We all need to speak up. We cannot be silent about it. Being here today is one of the things we can do to step out and make sure our voices are heard."

Editor's Note: Addison County Senator Ruth Hardy is married to Professor of Film and Media Studies Jason Mittell, who serves as faculty adviser to The Campus. He had no role in the publication of this article.



NADIA HARE / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The interior and exterior of Town Hall Theater, where Hardy and Mitchell hosted the community forum with several of Vermont's elected officials.

The Middlebury Marquis Theatre to get a vintage-inspired "face-lift"

By LILY JENSEN
Staff Writer

COURTESY PHOTO

The Middlebury Marquis is in its second stage of renovations. The first stage repaired external damages and the second will introduce a brand-new, vintage-inspired exterior.

The Middlebury Marquis announced on March 31 that it would temporarily close for its renovation project until May 1. The project will focus on exterior aesthetics, creating a vintage-inspired facade for the front of the theater featuring bold colors, bright lights and other art deco-inspired elements. The new look is meant to evoke a sense of nostalgia for classic movie theaters, including a vertical sign with blue and cream colors often seen in the art deco style.

According to Ben Wells, the owner of the Marquis, the vision for the design evolved through trial and error.

"We had a design that was not approved by the town and we kind of went back to the drawing board," Wells said. "We decided long ago against doing any sort of like, big three-sided thing that comes out with bare light bulbs."

With a 100-year-old building, renovations are pretty much nonstop for the Marquis. Since buying the theater, Wells has overseen the installation of a new roof, furnace, seating, sound, lights, laser projectors, and screens.

This specific renovation is the second stage in a larger project. The first stage was a repair of the overhang on the exterior of the building with a stucco that partially collapsed in December 2023, blocking the front door and forcing the Marquis to close temporarily.

Phase two is now focused on curb appeal, though Wells believes its value extends far beyond appearances.

"We want to be a comfort spot for people...There's a lot of stress in the world. It's important to me that there's a space for this community to relax, to go out to see other people, to see friends, to celebrate...and movies are a story form that's written and made and produced to be viewed in a shared experience," Wells said.

Built in 1919 as a Vaudeville theater with a single showing space, the Marquis transitioned into a movie theatre in the 1950s. Since then, it expanded to three screens and later returned to two under Wells.

Movie theaters all over the country are shutting down due to financial trouble, particularly small town theaters. Despite these trends, the Marquis is surviving, largely due to its diversified revenue streams from its attached restaurant, trivia night, birthday parties, bingo and comedy shows, according to Wells. He pointed out that people still come to the movies themselves, even when they could access them with just a click of a button at home. Wells believes that movie theaters are not just about movies — they are also community gathering centers.

"There've been a variety of studies over the years. Small towns that have a movie theater, there are many economic indicators that those towns do much better. There's a higher quality of life," Wells said.

Middlebury College students have felt the impact of the Marquis' temporary closure. Many frequent the theater not just for the films, but for its unique atmosphere.

"I like the comfy chairs down there. It's not a traditional movie theater. It feels more homey and cozy," Ella Powers '27 said.

"It's the only movie theater I've ever been to where you can sit on a couch," Birch Banks '25 said. "They also have that big poster rack outside of old posters. I've actually gotten a number of posters from my room from there."

Some students said they are disappointed about the temporary closure, while others felt excited about the renovation.

"I was actually really saddened by [the closure], though. I was really excited to see the Minecraft movie there and the renovations happened right before," Banks added.

"I think that [the new facade] is awesome. I'm always for anything vintage or antique," Powers said.

As the Marquis prepares to reopen, anticipation is growing among town residents and students alike. The space is expected to reopen for trivia on May 1 and for movie screenings the following day.

Vermont wines. Vermont vibes.

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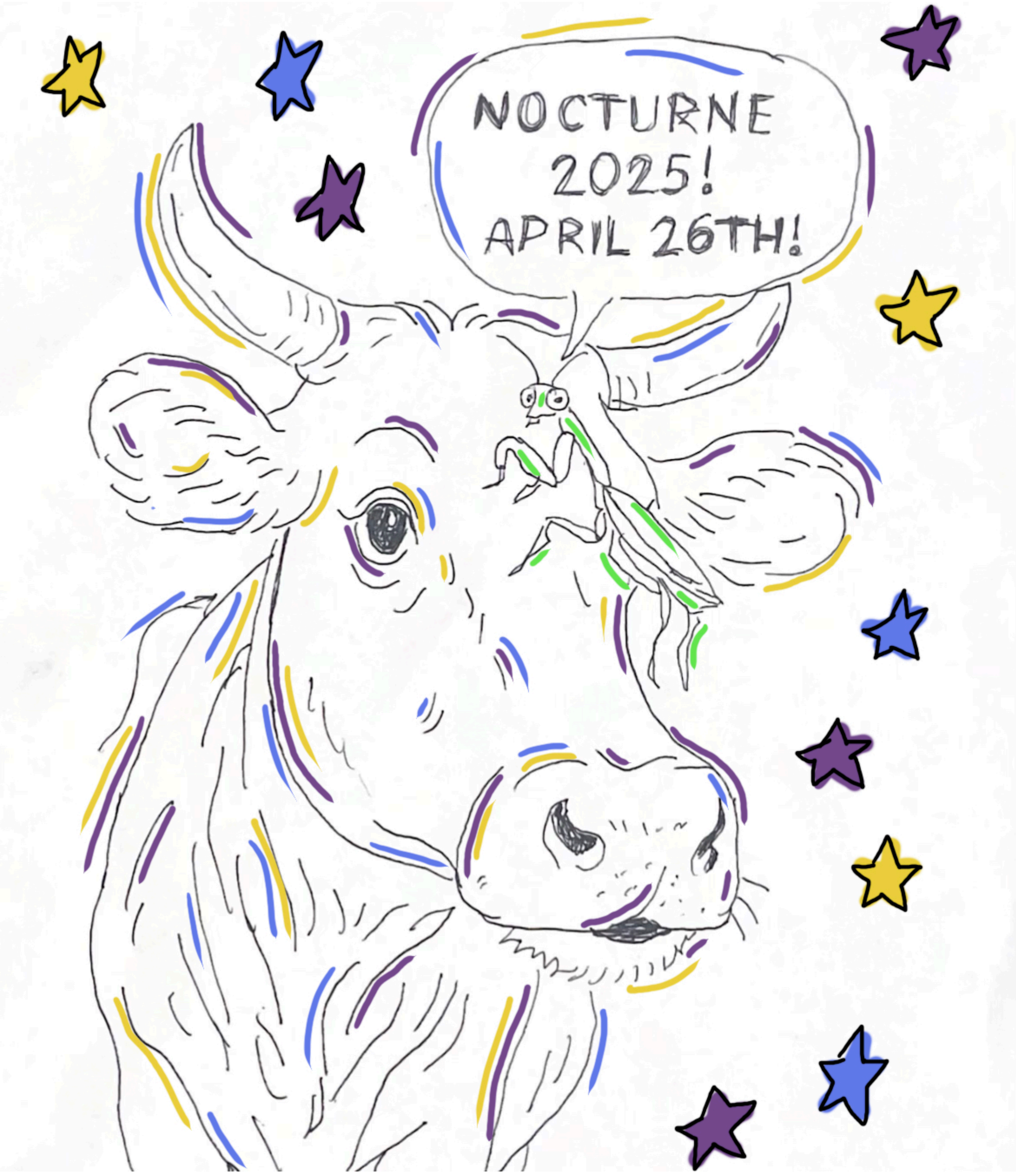

NOCTURNE 2025! APRIL 26TH!

Nocturne, Middlebury's annual student art festival, is back for its eighth year! This Saturday, April 26, all of campus will be filled with visual art, musical performances, comedic skits and so many other awesome student projects. It's going to be a magical night... we'll see you there. go/nocturne!

WHILE WE'RE DEFENDING RESEARCH, LET'S TALK ABOUT WRITING TOO

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

The Middlebury Campus

SUSANNA SCHATZ

Last week, Middlebury students and faculty participated in the 18th annual Spring Student Symposium, which highlighted over 200 student research projects. The symposium spotlights undergraduate research at Middlebury at a time when the Trump administration has been cutting the funding of projects at large and small universities alike. Since the college heavily promotes the possibilities for student researchers on their website and on tours for prospective students, it's worth debating what priority the institution should give to providing these research opportunities.

While research is an essential component of many departments at Middlebury, most notably the STEM fields that reside in BiHall, in conversations about research the college cannot omit its core focus: the liberal arts. Independent scientific inquiry means little if students cannot write about it in an effective and compelling way, or if research opportunities pop up sporadically for only a few Middlebury students.

In the ongoing discussions about the value of threatened research, the college should also reassert basic principles of writing and rigor that are currently lacking from its curriculum. The values of a Middlebury education need to be instilled in students from their first semester: We must revamp the first year seminar requirement to implement standardized assignments. Every first year student should know how to write a 10 page paper; the College Writing requirements need to have standardized expectations for their amount of writing too, which would ensure everyone graduates with experience writing longer papers.

Departments in the humanities and sciences alike should take steps to facilitate more independent student research, including the option to take a thesis. Research opportunities should be a component of our education that are more widely accessible, but pre-professional research experience is not the capstone to a Middlebury career, despite what the Spring Student Symposium may suggest. While we're defending the value of student research and scientific exploration, why not use that stage to recommit ourselves to the basics: writing, reading and critical analysis.

We do agree with the general principle that independent, creative student-led research is a fulfilling experience made possible by attending a liberal arts college. While Middlebury student researchers may not be at the forefront of groundbreaking scientific research, focusing on a specialized area through research is a way for students to develop their academic skills, relationships with professors and explore a new, exciting idea.

Yet, depending on the department, it can be difficult and sometimes downright discouraging to try to complete undergraduate research or a thesis. Recent budget cuts and over-enrollment affect professors' capacity to advise a large number of students in independent projects. Humanities students are often given fewer opportunities to conduct research than their peers in BiHall. Meanwhile, STEM students can find themselves siphoned into conducting research in a faculty member's lab rather than pursuing their own independent research, which takes significant planning and bureaucratic knowledge to complete.

We are not advocating for professors taking on heavier workloads to advise students — especially in light of recent cuts to their compensation — but we believe that research opportunities should be accessible to all parts of campus. Like it is the college's responsibility to provide us with a liberal arts education, it is also their job to give professors the full support they need to meet their students' needs for independent projects. Increasing enrollment without a parallel increase in faculty is certainly not the way to do this.

This is just another reason why the college should reverse those budget cuts and restore faculty's morale in the process. An additional way to improve Middlebury's academic environment would be to commit to replacing lost or frozen research funding targeted by the federal government. In a time of internal and external upheaval, our research opportunities should not suffer.

This time of uncertainty for scientific inquiry should also prompt some soul-searching about the sum of our academic environment. Although some may point to bias from a group of students who write and edit for fun in calling for more rigorous writing requirements and projects in classrooms, we are in danger of losing basic skills. No one can deny the growing threat of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) to college students' writing skills. Expectations across first year seminars and the college writing credits are inconsistent, and standardizing these requirements to force us to write longer papers or conduct deeper research in niche fields of our own interest would hamper the perilous crutch of A.I. — it's a lot harder to write a strong 10-page paper with "unauthorized aid" than a four-pager. These are serious concerns the college should be thinking about as it admits more and more classes of students who have had access to ChatGPT since their sophomore years of high school.

As part of our reordering of the college's academic landscape, we must emphasize the role of independent senior work, especially the senior thesis. A student who has only ever written at most a 4–5 page paper can easily fulfill their graduation requirements, but they are unlikely to elect to write a serious senior thesis or to participate in research. Let's restore a bare minimum of academic rigor to our course load. The possibility of writing over 40 pages for a senior project won't feel as intimidating if students are conditioned to write longer papers earlier in their time here; everyone should be capable of doing a senior thesis in any department if they feel passionate and have the time to do so.

Like many issues at our liberal arts college, student research is entangled in the institutional underpinnings of budgeting and bureaucracy. We must ensure Middlebury College is upholding its principles of academic integrity and scientific inquiry through college-wide support for students and faculty. A widespread guarantee of research opportunities and writing standards would be a positive step forward for current and future Middlebury students.

NOTES FROM THE DESK: HOW DOES THE CAMPUS APPROACH ANONYMITY?

Op-Ed

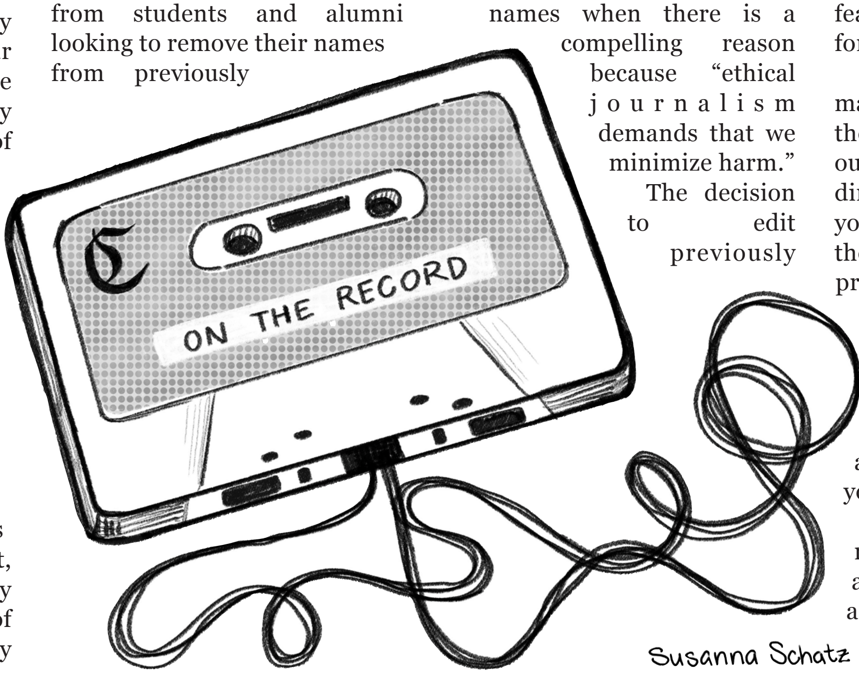
Ryan McElroy *is the Editor in Chief and a member of class of 2025.*

The Middlebury Campus has recently received a number of inquiries about our process for granting anonymity and removing names and pictures from our online publication. Our official policy on the subject, as listed on our website, remains the same: We only grant sources anonymity if they have a credible fear of retaliation or other specific, harmful consequences that would result from being named in our paper.

We consider anonymity a privilege, not a right, that is to be used sparingly in order to maintain our credibility. The Campus is made up of student journalists eager to write strong stories and report on critical issues, and while naming sources ensures our readers' trust, protecting people's privacy can be an essential part of our work. In recent memory we have offered anonymity to staff members speaking out against their managers and supervisors; we've heard from members of Facilities Services and Dining Services about the unfair burdens of understaffing while simultaneously being underpaid.

The very first op-ed I edited as a member of the paper's Exec Team was an anonymous piece by a local restaurant employee sharing their view on deteriorated town-gown relations. When a story would otherwise go untold due to tangible fears of retaliation from an employer, the college administration or other forces, The Campus must balance transparency with safety.

Like many other student newspapers, our editorial standards have been challenged in recent weeks. An op-ed in the fellow NESCAC student publication the Tufts Daily appears to have contributed to the detainment of a graduate student there, prompting ethical questions about the best practices for student reporters. In the past two months, we have received about a dozen requests from students and alumni looking to remove their names from previously published stories out of fear that their quotations and op-eds may flag them to the U.S. government.



Susanna Schatz

Our process to each request is a case-by-case approach. We evaluate every person's unique circumstances to see how we can best preserve a story's integrity without endangering people in our community. We have retroactively changed several stories on our website for international students who have specific fears about their immigration status in the U.S. This is not an automatic decision; I have also rejected inquiries from contributors looking for changes who did not have clear, safety-based reasons to seek anonymity.

In our decisions we have been guided by the practices of other student newspapers and legal guidance from the Student Press Law Center, a national nonprofit dedicated to defending and advising student publications on a range of issues. They recommended earlier this month that newspapers consider granting requests to remove previously published names when there is a compelling reason because "ethical journalism demands that we minimize harm." The decision to edit previously published stories is not one we made lightly. The editors on our staff are serious about their duty to report on major issues and concerns at the college, and that requires trust from our readers. The Campus is not afraid to publish controversial stories — I've written several myself — and as a result we frequently receive criticism, whether that lands in my email inbox, in our website's comment section or on YikYak. We can publish these investigative, sometimes controversial stories because our readers know we hold ourselves to a high standard of journalism.

We are still committed to issuing corrections when we make factual mistakes, and our anonymity policy will remain the same for any student, faculty member, employee or administrator we speak to this spring. We will not remove entire quotes or unpublish opinion pieces from our website; our changes have been strictly limited to removing identifying information. Yet the current situation in the U.S. calls for an exceptional response to credible fears among our student body for their safety in the U.S.

To students who feel they may have safety concerns about their name or image being in our newspaper: reach out to me directly. I want to understand your concerns so we can make the best decision that will protect both of our interests. To anyone who feels afraid of being named in our paper in the future, do not let that discourage you from talking to us or submitting an op-ed. We want to hear your concerns and share your story, whether or not you are named publicly. Our writers and editors are as committed as ever to holding Middlebury College accountable; it is more important than ever for people to tell us what they're thinking and feeling on a campus-wide and national level.

As the whole college community navigates the uncertain environment of higher education, so too is The Campus adapting to the new reality of student journalism in 2025. The priority for our approach to anonymity this spring is maintaining our rigorous editorial standards while considering the best interests of the student body and college community as a whole.

The Middlebury Campus

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More information about the paper and its submission policies can be found online at www.middleburycampus.com.

The opinions expressed by contributors to the Opinions section, as well as reviews, columns, editorial comics and other commentary, are views of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the newspaper. The Campus welcomes letters to the editor at 250 words or less, or opinions submissions at 800 words or less.

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The Middlebury Campus

HOW PHOTOGRAPHER RANIA MATAR CAPTURES CROSS-CULTURAL WOMANHOOD

By **CHRISTY LIANG**
Staff Writer

COURTESY PHOTO / RANIA MATAR

Rania Matar came to Middlebury to give a lecture on her photgraphy exhibit "SHE."

Lebanese Palestinian American artist Rania Matar gave a captivating talk about her photography exhibition "SHE" in the Middlebury College Museum of Art on April 17. The event — initially planned for when her exhibit debuted back in February — was rescheduled due to unforeseen weather circumstances. Titled "From the Personal to the Universal," the talk chronicled Matar's photography career, spanning from the U.S. to the Middle East.

Originally coming to the U.S. in the 1980s to study architecture at Cornell University, Matar did not discover her love for photography until she became a mother. Enthralled by the beauty in the mundane and chaotic moments at home, she picked up the camera to document her children.

Beyond domestic life, Matar was drawn to the universal complexity of girlhood and womanhood, which led to her photographic series "A Girl and Her Room." Capturing teenage girls on the cusp of womanhood in an intimate space of their own creation, Matar discovered the universality of growing up — a counter sentiment to the overarching divisiveness in the U.S. after 9/11. In this collection, Matar experimented with proximity — "how much closer could I get to them [before being chased away]."

Each photograph is a glimpse into teenage angst, performativity and vulnerability. The organic mess of the room externalizes the girls' emotions. Matar also juxtaposes the passage of time both in the individual sense of growing up and in the intergenerational bond between mothers and daughters.

Especially interesting were the photographs where the mother-daughter pair both occupy a space with an unspoken yet potent intimacy — the genetic bond made apparent by the striking similarity in one or more features. The mirror motif further complicates this dynamic of kinship by introducing notions of assessment, parental control and repetition of inherited patterns.

Matar's photographs of Lebanese women are gripping and poetic testimonies to the devastating aftermath of the Lebanese Civil War and the timeless grace of human resilience. Against derelict backgrounds, these women turn sites of ruins and rubble into means of empowerment. Matar collaborates closely with her subjects to decide on the spatial and stylistic arrangement of these photo shoots. One of the women chose to be photographed near broken glass because she was once injured by it, making the process of creating art a cathartic one.

According to Matar's statement on her professional website, her photographic process is "collaborative, and the photo session evolves organically as they become active participants in the image-making process, presiding over the environment, and making it their own." She finds herself "focusing on their strength and their majestic presence."

In another image, Matar photographs a woman, Farah, in her burned car. In October 2019, protests broke out across Lebanon against political and economic corruption. Farah was one of the thousands of protestors and returned to find her car burned by those attempting to undermine the protestors' movement. Matar specifically asked Farah to keep the car in its ruined state for a photo to memorialize the moment.

Most photographs, however, were not as intentional. In another photograph, Alae — a young Lebanese woman Matar collaborates with extensively — is pictured in the aftermath of the August 2020 Beirut port explosion, which led to over 200 deaths, thousands of injuries and widespread displacement in the country. Standing on the top floor of Matar's father-in-law's apartment, Alae looks out into the distance, her face reflected in a small circular mirror that she holds up. The viewer becomes a voyeur to Alae's private introspection, her gaze unfocused on the camera. Her expression is testament to the immeasurability of loss and the incomprehensibility of war.

Anchored firmly by individual expression, Matar's photographs reflect a timeless and borderless sentiment, underscoring our shared humanity across geographical and cultural connections. Her work testifies to the unfaltering power of art against larger destructive forces.

Campus Tour

Egan Turner

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ACROSS

1 "Welcome to Middlebury! We'll start the tour from ___ Willard House, the home of our admissions office"
5 "Oh, give it ___!
10 NYC attraction for art lovers
14 Taste of India bread
15 "Book Club" Actress Keaton
16 Ocean Spray prefix
17 Utah ski resort on the Ikon Pass
18 "On our right, you'll see the college's original chemistry building... and inside someone's embezzling money... can we get PubSafe on this?"
20 California's west side?
22 How drones take footage
23 "Now on your left, take a look at our only brick building, particularly the area surrounding it. Looks a little supernatural to me..."
26 Pride is one
27 Before, to a bard
28 24+ mos.
29 Cage part
32 Muscle contraction
34 Prefix for mania and technic
35 Next, turn your gaze to a dorm where many febs reside. Wait, why is no one moving? Is Medusa around? Avert your gaze, now!"
41 A Pole, for example
42 Love, for Luigi (no, not that Luigi)
43 Yang counterpart
44 Vitamin co.
47 Qty.
48 Former "The Simpsons" shopkeeper
51 "Let's check out the building with the Makerspace! Although there seems to be some force field around it... Is that Neville Longbottom?"
54 Gryphon or centaur, for example
57 Greek yogurt brand
58 Finally, let's see a part of the Ross Complex home to many sophomores. Huh, all the windows seem to have bars. Are they converting it to a prison for those who don't pay their parking tickets?"
61 Bloodiness
62 Fail to mention
63 Kemper of "The Office"
64 Honolulu dance form
65 Food with a pocket
66 Highlighter colors
67 "Bye-bye!", to a texter

DOWN

1 Effects
2 20% of this country's area is occupied by a lake with the same name
3 "CODA" actress Marlee
4 "If the only tool you have is a hammer, everything looks like ___"
5 Pt. of speech that usually is?
6 Animated movie featuring macaws
7 Really bother
8 Friend of Doc, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy, Bashful, and Dopey
9 Intense fear
10 "Greedy" singer Tate
11 Spoken
12 Darth ___
13 Artist Warhol
19 Bass body parts
21 Famous Guy?
24 German tennis star Steffi
25 Prefix for sphere
29 "The Catcher in the ___"
30 Agcy. that's taxing to deal with?
31 Captcha failer
32 Honda SUV
33 Annoyance for a princess trying to sleep
34 Before, not to a bard
35 "Gangnam Style" artist
36 One of the Manning brothers of NFL fame
37 Get some sun
38 Key relative to B min.
39 Anxiety from not being there, for short
40 Greek prefix meaning "straight"
44 Slalom obstacle
45 One of the most common surnames in the world, particularly in Vietnam
46 Adirondack ___
48 Invite on a date
49 Not well
50 Open, as an envelope
51 Mediterranean island with its own language combining aspects of English, French, and Arabic
52 "Kung Fu Fighting" singer Green
53 Stargazing time
54 Use an ax
55 "Bohemian Rhapsody" actor Malek
56 Tide turned?
59 Architect Maya
60 ___ Misérables

TO HELL AND BACK: BENJAMIN ADAM WEISS ’25 PRESENTS “HADESTOWN: A SONG CYCLE SUNG AGAIN”

By SAMMY JO SERELL
Contributing Writer

Middlebury was transported into a mythical Ancient Greece this past weekend when Benjamin Adam Weiss ’25 debuted his joint musical theater-sociology thesis, “Hadestown: A Song Cycle Sung Again.” Held in the lower level of the Mahaney Arts Center (MAC), the concert showcased a reimagined version of the beloved Broadway musical, all within an hour and 15 minutes.

Written by Middlebury alum Anaïs Mitchell ’04, “Hadestown” has won multiple Tony awards, including Best Musical in 2019. A tale of sorrow, loss, oppression and passion, “Hadestown” tells the story of epic love while criticizing repressive powers and advocating for resistance.

The musical follows Orpheus, a young man blessed with the gift of song, and his mission to rescue his lover, Eurydice, after she chooses to go to Hadestown to escape the harsh realities of the world they live in. Once in Hadestown, however, all she finds are workers who are trampled under the foot of Hades, the oppressive ruler of this dystopia.

Sam Lueke ’28 delivered a stellar performance as the starry-eyed lover Orpheus. Lueke perfectly captured Orpheus’ naive and earnest nature, their voice blending beautifully with Eurydice, played by Summer Eaton ’25 during one of their final shows at Middlebury.

The Fates (Nonna Madoyan ’28, Chandni Desai ’25 and Zoe Park ’27.5) sang in eerie harmony while taunting the protagonists, adding to the dark atmosphere Weiss aimed to create. Hermes (Nathaniel Rubens Goldfarb ’28) captivated audiences with his charisma as he guided Orpheus and Eurydice down the “Road to Hell.”

Sara Hayward ’28 offered a brilliant portrayal of the goddess Persephone, maintaining the comedic timing of the character while singing opposite Hades, played by Marco Motroni ’25.

For his concert, Weiss recruited people from all corners of campus; some are involved with Middlebury College Musical Theater, and some had never even heard of the musical “Hadestown” before auditioning. Many of the musicians in the band have trained classically and with the Middlebury College Orchestra. Under the guidance of band director and pianist Brett Sorbo ’24.5, the band moved and played together in a way that — like the song “All I’ve Ever Known” suggests — shouted “We see and understand each other.” It was clear that Weiss and Sorbo had created the magic of music, or the “shimmer moment,” as Weiss likes to call it.

His thesis extends much deeper than just the musical “Hadestown,” however. Through organizing this concert, he sought to answer the question: “Why do we perform?” By conducting interviews with the members of the cast, Weiss came to a definite conclusion: We perform for social connection.

“Music is kind of like a language, where you learn to trust each other. And that feeling, where everything sort of comes together, where you feel like you can lean on each other musically, […] it just fills your heart; you make magic,” Weiss explained.

Tapping into the sociological aspect of his thesis, Weiss aimed to change the rehearsal pedagogy through this concert. He tailored the process to the performers; learning how they like to receive notes, starting and ending rehearsals with grounding exercises and dance parties and helping the cast feel more connected to each other.

Even the set was deliberately designed to create community and a social space. Weiss chose the alcove in the lower level of the MAC because it is, as he describes, a “transient space.” Scenic designer Tyler Hadar ’25 and lighting designer Zeon Waterhouse ’28 helped emphasize this even more, transforming the space from a vacant lobby to a cozy jazz bar.

The old café in the MAC, which closed due to Covid-19 restrictions, now remains mostly unused. But Weiss wanted to bring life and community back into the space and prove that it could be used for concerts.

“Nothing ever happens there,” Weiss said. “I wanted to make it more. It’s sort of a liminal space, a space that lacks identity. You’re always going through it to get your rehearsal or your concert or museum, and no one ever really lingers there.”

In his Friday night curtain speech, Weiss encouraged audience members to stand up and dance, get to know the people around them and to have fun.

By putting on this concert and bringing new life to the alcove in the MAC, Weiss and the cast and crew of his Hadestown concert reimagined what “performance” can be, leaving Middlebury a better place than they found it.

COURTESY PHOTOS / ANDY GOBIN

Pictured left to right: Persephone (Sarah Hayward ’28), Hades, (Marco Motroni ’25), and Hermes (Nathaniel Rubens Goldfarb ’28)

The cast and crew of Hadestown: A Song Cycle Sung Again, which went up this past weekend in the MAC.

MAKES YA FEEL: MY TOP THREE APRIL ALBUMS

By ELLIE TRINKLE
Senior Arts & Culture Editor

Gallery hoppers, Spotify stalkers, bookworms, Letterboxd users and anyone who enjoys art, this is the place for you. Makes Ya Feel highlights art across all of its mediums, small- and large-scale, that (you guessed it) makes ya feel!

Gallery hoppers, Spotify stalkers, bookworms, Letterboxd users and anyone who enjoys art, this is the place for you. Makes Ya Feel highlights art across all of its mediums, small and large-scale, that (you guessed it) makes ya feel!

Spring at Middlebury is (finally) in full swing, and despite a brief snow fluke, it seems like it is planning to stay. With April coming to an end and campus finishing to bloom, I find myself listening to music that reflects the growth that is so present throughout the month. These albums sound like spring to me: warm and forgiving.

So, here are three of my most listened to albums that encapsulate April in all its showers and late-month flowers.

Rocket — Alex G

This album by Pennsylvania native Alex G is always on my rotation when spring arrives; its twangy, distorted sound provides the perfect soundtrack for any kind of spring day. Each song feels vast — like a huge grassy field — and incorporates sounds from nature, creating an unforgettable atmosphere.

“Bobby” in all of its country-twang glory is a song that explores a speaker watching his friend struggle, but promises to clean up his messes for him. “I know you,” the speaker sings, showing his friend that he doesn’t have to struggle in silence. Then there’s “Witch,” a fun yet eerie keyboard song about the struggles of being young through the metaphor of a witch: “No matter what you do/ The witch burns you.”

One of my favorite tracks “Poison Root” features the sound of a dog barking in the beginning, and blends folk and psychedelic styles together. The final lyric “Now I know everything” is repeated several times, suggesting the speaker has successfully completed a journey. It is a hopeful song that is both extremely grounded and excitingly undefined.

The final track on the album, “Guilty,” uses a saxophone to create a sound reminiscent of jazz and early folk styles of music. Despite its lyrics which highlight feelings of unworthiness and insecurity, the instrumentals serve as a parallel; mellow and hazy, they argue that the harsh feelings the speaker is feeling are merely temporary.

Anak Ko — Jay Som

This album by Los Angeles based singer and producer Melina Duterte — better known by her stage name Jay Som — is a vibrant dream-pop story about change and individuality. The title is Tagalog for “my child,” and was inspired by messages Duterte received from her mother. It is this very intimacy that weaves the album together.

“Superbike” is airy and intricately layered with fuzzy melodies and personal confessions like “I’ve fallen from your lips/Straight to your fingertips.” The speaker dreams of leaving her lover behind by envisioning speeding down the highway in a motorcycle. The song takes heartbreak and turns it into an ethereal and liberating image that cannot help but get stuck in your head.

If “Superbike” is a fantasy, then “Devotion” serves as a stark contrast where the speaker becomes grounded and introspective. Here, the speaker acknowledges wanting to change, but also acknowledges that growth is not linear: “Just takes some time/To come back down to earth.” It is honest in its lyrical content, but still retains the whimsical instrumentals that appear throughout the album.

SKILES ROBERTS-SALVADOR/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Foxbase Alpha — Saint Etienne

Saint Etienne is an English band from the 90s who are known for their unique sound that blends alternative and electronic dance styles together. “Foxbase Alpha” was their debut studio album, and to this day it is the perfect album for spring.

The first track “This Is Radio Etienne” is a mere 42 seconds long, but immediately brings an atmospheric feeling to the album, immersing listeners into their sound. The next track is a cover of Neil Young’s “Only Love Can Break Your Heart,” where the band takes the classic folk song and reimagines it into a dubstep electronic song. Listening to it not only makes you want to start swaying, but it also sounds like a perfect spring day where the sun is out and you cannot help but bask in the feeling of it all.

Then there’s “Kiss and Make Up,” which incorporates similar dubstep electronic elements to help tell the story of someone who is apologizing to a romantic partner. Lyrics like “I could never hate you” and “Let’s kiss and make up” add to the song’s playfulness. It’s a song for every occasion; I played it in the background during dinner parties with friends, studied to it and danced around with it blasting in my headphones.

My personal favorite track is “Spring,” a whimsically upbeat song about nostalgia, youth and (you guessed it) spring. With samples from “The Time Is Right For Love” by Bobby Reed and “Funky Drummer” by James Brown, this song is instrumentally complex and fun to listen to. This soundtracked my walks to and from class and kept me excited as the days progressively got warmer. “It’s only springtime” the speaker sings, and indeed it is, in all its simplistic joy.

WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD DOMINATES HOME INVITATIONAL WITH NESCAC FOUR-PEAT IN SIGHT

By TING CUI
Senior Sports Editor

They say champions aren't fazed by a little water, and last Saturday, Middlebury's women's track and field team transformed a rain-soaked Allan Dragone Track into their personal splash zone of dominance. In their final home performance, before attempting an unprecedented fourth consecutive NESCAC title, the Panthers didn't just compete — they conquered, stacking the podium like a game of Jenga.

Before the competition began, the Panthers honored their 13 seniors in a pre-meet ceremony celebrating their contributions to a program that has established itself as a NESCAC powerhouse. Emotions ran high as the program celebrated Anna Krouse '25.5, Macy Daggitt '25, Elle Thompson '25, Jaxon Palmer '25, Madeline Sauders '25, Kate Ratcliffe '25, Reilly Isler '25, Violet Ross '25, Zoe Wang '25, Addie Morrison '25, Bea Parr '25, Jessica Warren '25 and Nikky Sztachelski '25. After the ceremony, it was strictly business — and business was booming.

"This weekend was really fun, a great culmination of Middlebury track and field and our only spring home meet," Daggitt said. "The underclassmen were so supportive; they gave us posters, our coaches gave mini bottles of maple syrup, and lots of families came. It was just a really supportive environment."

The results from the home meet demonstrated the strength and depth of the women's team and why they're favored to extend their NESCAC reign next weekend. The 1,500-meter? Middlebury held all positions in the top five. Javelin? Owned. Pole vault? Swept.

Despite the rain and wind, which have been a recurring theme for New England meets this season, performances remained outstanding.

"I ran a personal best, and a lot of the team did too, despite the rain," Krouse said. "We have a really gritty team, I think, and even when the weather's bad, we train hard."

Middlebury's middle-distance crew played "follow the leader" in the 1,500-meter, with Ross (4:57.54) leading a 1–2–3 finish and Ratcliffe clocking a personal-best 5:03.33. In the field events, where footing was slippery, the Panthers showed their technical precision. Isler hurled the javelin 34.97 meters for gold, with teammates Palmer (32.06m) and Margaret Kim '28 (28.75m) filling out the podium. In pole vault, Wang led the medal sweep by clearing a height of 3.40 meters, followed in second and third by Claire Miller '26 and Warren.

With the NESCAC Championship approaching, the women's team has already commenced its traditions. Daggitt shared that body paint, face glitter, temporary tattoos and hair ribbons will make appearances at the championship. "There will be lots of accessories — look good, race good, feel hype," she said joyfully.

The Panthers are known throughout the conference for their unmatched enthusiasm and team spirit, creating tunnels for relay teams and bringing an energy that transforms the atmosphere of championship meets.

"I'm so excited for NESCACs… The Middlebury team has won for the last three years, and we're trying to go for that four-peat, but nothing is given. People are gonna have to score, especially those that aren't expected to score," Krouse said. "I think what could win the championship is the team that has the most spirit and wants it the most. Anything can happen."

BURN IT UP!!!
HYPE
Reilly
NIKKY
Addie Mo
BEA
KATE
VIOLET
BUFFS!
2025
ZOE

COURTESY PHOTO / WILL COSTELLO

The Middlebury womens track and field team celebrating senior day at this past weekend's home meet, the Middlebury Invitational.

The women's success over recent years hasn't gone unnoticed by their male counterparts.

Xander Swann '25 expressed admiration for what the women have built.

"It's been really exciting to be able to practice with the women every day. They're obviously three-time consecutive NESCAC champions, and it's been really awesome to see them win these last few years. It has inspired us to get there as well. It's great to see them hoist that trophy, but we want that ourselves too and have both teams win at NESCACs," he told The Campus.

The men haven't been too shabby themselves this year. This past weekend at the Middlebury Invitational, Sam Opawuyi '27 soared to a program-record 13.95 meters in the triple jump, leading another Panther podium sweep with Jed Nelson '26.5 (13.36m) and Sam McGarrahan '25.5 (13.03m). Not to be outdone, Swann demolished the record in the 400 hurdles, clocking 52.52 seconds and erasing a mark (53.45) that had stood since 2006.

The men's team, which hasn't claimed a NESCAC title since 2019, flexed their championship potential with dominant performances across the board. The Panthers swept podiums in events like the triple jump, 400-meter hurdles, 1,500-meter, and discus, suggesting this could be the year they return to conference glory.

"The most important thing for the team [at NESCACs] is bringing the energy," Swann said. "We had a lot of success in the later events [on Saturday] just because we had so many people cheering and excited for the team."

Prior to the start of the men's side of competition, the program also honored its 17 graduating seniors.

As the final home meet of the regular season, the invitational provided one last opportunity for the Panthers to fine-tune their performances before next weekend's NESCAC Championship, where they'll aim to make program history.

If Saturday's dominant showing was any indication, both the men's and women's teams are looking ready for their championship moment — though nothing is guaranteed. They face tough competition from schools like Tufts University, Williams College and Amherst College.

When asked what gives Middlebury an edge, Krouse shared that it was about the depth of talent on the women's team, team culture and team leadership.

"We take the meet really seriously, and we work really hard. I think our team has by far the best spirit at NESCACs. I think what could win the championship is the team that has the most spirit and wants it the most. Anything can happen," she said.

The NESCAC Championship begins next Saturday at 9 a.m. at Wesleyan University, where the women will attempt to make conference history with their fourth consecutive crown. The women's squad first captured the NESCAC title in 1998 and added another championship in 2000. Meanwhile, the men will attempt to win their first NESCAC title since the 2018–19 season.

THE SILENCE AFTER THE ROAR: RORY WINS THE MASTERS

By KANAN CLIFFORD
Staff Writer

For 11 years, there was one room in the golf world that Rory McIlroy could not enter — the Augusta National Champions Clubhouse. On Sunday, April 13, Rory exorcised his demons and finally stepped into that hallowed space after his second shot into the first playoff hole sealed his place in an elite seven-man club alongside Tiger Woods and Jack Nicklaus.

"McIlroy has his masterpiece," legendary broadcaster Jim Nantz declared before falling silent, allowing the emotion of Mcllroy's win to show through the screen. But his silence, and that of McIlroy, was punctuated by cheers from viewers around the world, enraptured by the moment and thrilled for the man of the hour.

While standing over that four-foot putt, one he has made countless times through his career, 11 years of tragedy replayed through the minds of fans and fellow players.

As an avid recreational golfer, I can't help but feel connected to that moment — even if my meaningful putts are to shoot a good score, not to win the Masters. Just this past weekend, I drained a 25-foot birdie putt here at the Augusta-like Ralph Myhre Golf Course, some redemption for holes upon holes of missed three-footers — and even a couple of putts that completely slid off the green. It was, in my own way, a Rory Masters moment.

"My battle today was with myself," McIlroy said after his round, "It was a struggle, but I got it over the line."

COURTESY PHOTO / WILL COSTELLO

Morgan Lee '26 won the individual tournament while competing away at Williams College this weekend. The womens golf team placed third overall.

Mcllroy's years-long push to win the Masters reminds me of a team far closer to home searching for their first NESCAC title: the Middlebury women's golf team. They have placed in the top three in the last eight championships — finishing in second place twice — but their "green jacket" has eluded them. Could this be the year?

Perhaps Rory's long-awaited triumph — one that many in the sports world thought impossible — can serve as an omen for the Panthers, pushing them across the finish line. And just like Mcllroy, the team is trending upward, having come fresh off a third-place finish at Williams College this past weekend, where Morgan Lee '26 won the individual tournament.

Golf is torture, something anyone who has ever picked up a club and headed out to the links knows all too well. Golfers speak of the "golf gods" giving and taking away — often taking away more frequently, in the form of a bad bounce off of a tree, a lipped out putt, or (like Mcllroy) pulled four-foot putts that don't catch the lip. But every so often, the golf gods smile upon you as you catch lightning in a bottle, and magic happens. McIlroy had the spark of determination during the Masters tournament, and caught fire, burning a path towards that long-awaited clubhouse and a green jacket.

Eleven years. Four top-10 finishes and one infamous collapse in 2011 where he led by four strokes after three rounds, then carded a disastrous 80 on Sunday to finish tied for 15th place. This Masters win was not just a stroke of luck orchestrated by the golf gods — it required perseverance, faith and patience for Mcllroy to overcome the psychological block that was seemingly keeping him from entering the winners' circle. Making that final putt removed 11 years of pressure from his shoulders — an admirable story of resilience in the face of public adversity.

Golf is a beautiful, fickle game, and in many instances, it mirrors the challenges of broader life. It gives and takes, it creates community, it brings joy. McIlroy's Masters Tournament win represents something much more than just sports and teaches a lesson that the Middlebury women's golf team can value just as much as I will when approaching any new obstacles or opportunities.

SEVEN QUESTIONS WITH HOPE SHUE ’25, WOMEN’S LACROSSE

By **MAX MYERS**
Contributing Writer

COURTESY PHOTO / WILL COSTELLO

Hope Shue ’25, co-captain of the Middlebury women’s lacrosse team, recently broke the program’s all-time goal record with 272 and counting.

Hope Shue ’25 is a co-captain of the Middlebury women’s lacrosse team and a neuroscience major. This spring, she set a new program record for career goals, surpassing the previous mark of 228 set by Amy DiAdamo ’97. Shue now has 272 goals and counting. Over her career, she has earned Intercollegiate Women’s Lacrosse Coaches Association (IWLCA) Co-Offensive Player of the Week honors three times and has been named NESCAC Player of the Week five times. In this week’s edition of Seven Questions, the standout attacker shares how she got into the sport, her inspirations and her post-grad plans.

Max Myers: Tell us your background in lacrosse. What age did you start? Did you play other sports?

Hope Shue: I started playing lacrosse around fourth or fifth grade. At the time, I was also doing gymnastics and playing soccer. Honestly, I think it can be really frustrating to play girls lacrosse at a young age because the sticks are so bad, and you can’t really catch yet. The ball is on the ground 90% of the game. So it took me a while to start to like the sport outside of playing catch with my mom and dad in the yard. But once I started playing club lacrosse in sixth grade, I started to enjoy it a lot more!

MM: Were there any coaches or mentors throughout your life that you credit with helping your success?

HS: My mom was my youth lacrosse coach for many years and was a massive part of my skill and confidence building. She made lacrosse fun for me and all of my friends. Then my club and high school coach, Erin Massimi, really shaped me into the player I am today. She is a super competitive, constructive, and passionate coach who just always pushed me to be better.

MM: As a captain on the team, what is your leadership style?
HS: I have really tried to learn from every leader that has come before me on the team. I try to lead by example as best as I can; I never want to ask things of people that I wouldn’t do myself. I think that really motivates me to come to practice and work my absolute hardest every day and earn the respect and trust of my teammates. I also try to prioritize keeping practice and games as fun and positive as possible.

MM: Looking back on your career here, are there any particular memories that stand out?

HS: All the big playoff moments over the years sort of blend together, but I’d say the close, competitive games really stand out. Our freshman year, we lost the NESCAC championship to Tufts. I had two free positions in the last 30 seconds and missed them both, so I was pretty crushed, especially as a freshman, feeling like I had let my team down. Then, a month later, we beat them in the National Championship 13–5. That was one of the best moments. I couldn’t believe we had actually won when the clock ran out.

MM: Do you have any plans to continue with the sport after graduation?

HS: I hope to play some recreational lacrosse or soccer after college when I’m living in Boston. I think I will need some sort of competitive outlet, so I might try to take up tennis!

MM: Who or what inspires you, on or off the field?
HS: I’ve recently been thinking about Amy DiAdamo Foster a lot and the legacy she has left on the Middlebury Women’s Lacrosse program. Amy was a member of the class of 1997, a three-time All-American and the 1997 Division III Attacker of the Year. She was a prolific point scorer who helped Middlebury win its first national championship in 1997. Amy tragically lost her battle with cancer in 2015. Her legacy has had a tremendous impact on our team and my personal play.

Her quote “Never be cocky, never be intimidated, just be good” is something I think about a lot. When I broke her goal-scoring record earlier this year, I was overwhelmed by how many alumni reached out to me to say how proud she would have been of me, and it was incredibly moving. Her spirit and energy just seemed magnetic, and I am very honored to share the record books with her.

MM: After playing for a good portion of your life, are you excited to finally take a break from lacrosse, or will you miss it?

HS: I don’t feel ready yet to move on from lacrosse because I am so focused on this season. But I do think I will be ready come graduation to take a break. It will be an emotional goodbye to playing the sport competitively, but I definitely see some sort of coaching in my future.

Editor’s Note: This interview has been lightly edited for clarity.

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SIMON PEARCE

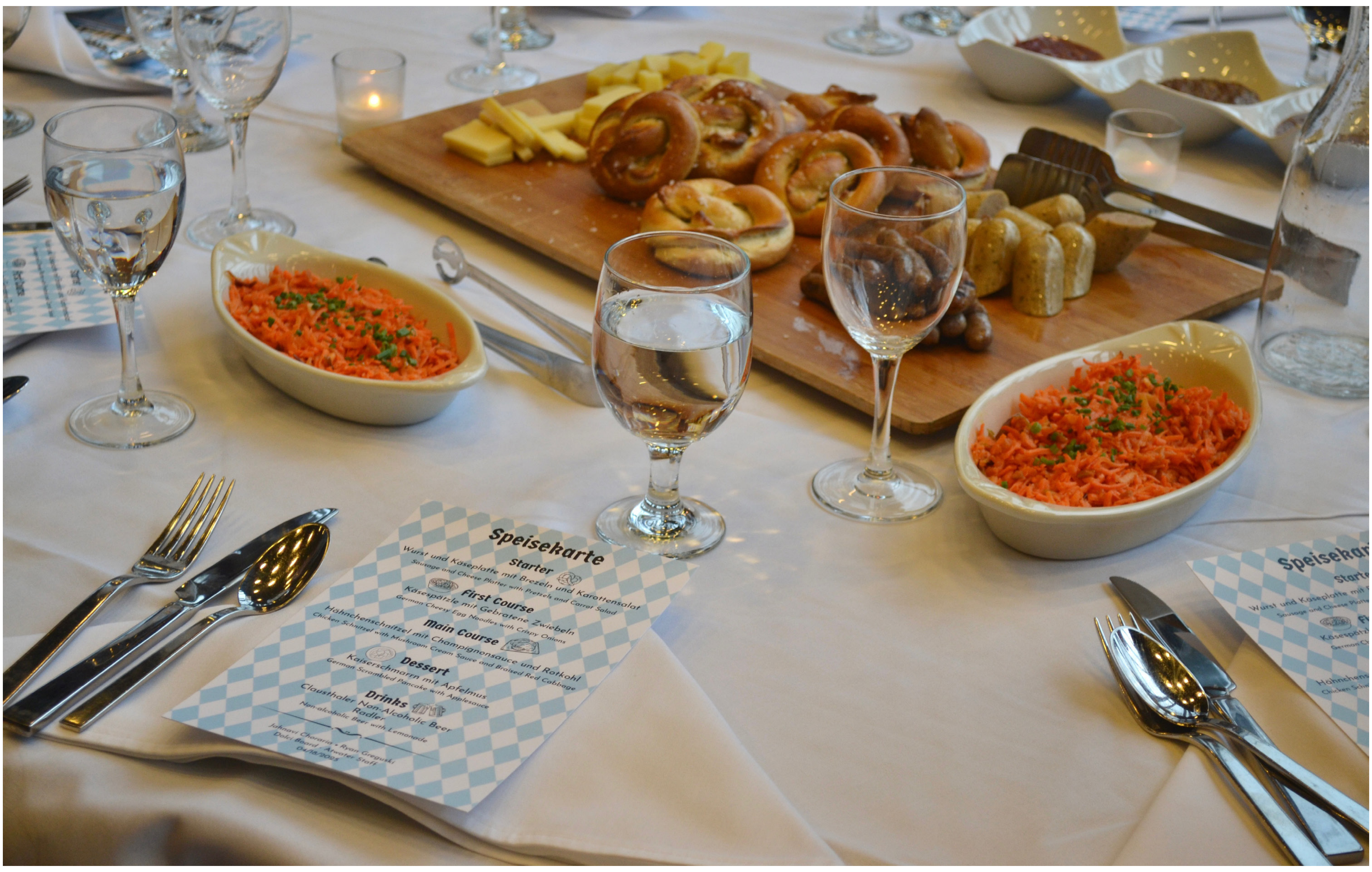
A glimpse of Dolci: Taste buds travel to Germany

JUNE SU / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

On Friday, April 18, Jahnavi Choraria '25 and Ryan Greguski '25 cooked and baked a German-inspired four course meal in Atwater Dining Hall with Dolci, Middlebury's student-run restaurant.

Dessert was scrambled pancakes with applesauce, a traditional Austrian treat.

The main course was chicken schnitzel with mushroom cream sauce and braised red cabbage, served with non-alcoholic beer.


Speisekarte
Starter
Wurst und Käseplatte mit Brezeln und Karottensalat
Sausage and Cheese Platter with Pretzels and Carrot Salad
First Course
Käsespätzle mit Gebratene Zwiebeln
German Cheesy Egg Noodles with Crispy Onions
Main Course
Hähnchenschnitzel mit Champignonsauce und Rotkohl
Chicken Schnitzel with Mushroom Cream Sauce and Braised Red Cabbage
Dessert
Kaiserschmarrn mit Apfelmus
German Scrambled Pancake with Applesauce
Drinks
Clausthaler Non-Alcoholic Beer
Radler
Non-alcoholic Beer with Lemonade
Jahnavi Choraria • Ryan Greguski
Dolci Board • Atwater Staff
04/18/2025

The starter course was a sausage and cheese platter with pretzels and carrot salad.

Choraria and Greguski studied abroad in Mainz, Germany last spring, inspiring them to cook and bake German food for their peers back on Middlebury's campus.

The first course was German cheesy egg noddles with crispy onions.